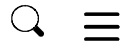


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# Get started: essential building blocks for Dropbox

Dropbox does so much more than backup files. It syncs files across all your devices, and let's you easily share those files and collaborate in the cloud. Get started with Dropbox in 5 easy steps.

## 1. Install the Dropbox apps

There are 3 ways to access your account: the mobile app, the desktop app, and the Dropbox website. To get the most from Dropbox, install the apps on your phone, tablet, and computer.

### Make it happen!

☒ [Download and install the Dropbox desktop app](#) on your computer (laptop or desktop)

☒ [Download and install the Dropbox mobile app](#) on your phone or tablet



### Hint

After you install the desktop app, you'll see a Dropbox folder on your computer's hard drive. Files in this folder will sync to Dropbox, meaning you can access them from any device.

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The cloud: Dropbox is a "cloud" service. This means that your files are stored on our secure servers rather than on your computer, phone, or tablet. A server is just another kind of computer, which you access with an internet connection.

## 2. Sign in to your account

The Dropbox website, desktop app, and mobile apps are like doorways that let you (and only you!) access your account.

### Make it happen!

☒ Sign in to each app with the same email address and password



#### Hint

Signing in with the same email address and password allows sync to function. It also helps ensure you'll see the same files no matter which device you use to access your Dropbox account.

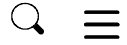


#### Building block

The desktop app: With the Dropbox desktop app, files are stored in the cloud, but a "backup" copy is also stored in the Dropbox folder on your computer; files in this folder still use storage space on your hard drive.

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You can add files to Dropbox in a few different ways.

## Make it happen!

- ✓ On the Dropbox desktop app, add files by dragging-and-dropping
- ✓ On a phone or tablet, open the Dropbox app and click the + icon to upload files
- ✓ On dropbox.com, add files with the Upload button or by dragging-and-dropping



### Hint

You can add (and preview) nearly any kind of file to Dropbox. If you add lots of files to Dropbox at once, it may take a while for the initial upload to complete.



### Building block

File types: You can add (and preview) nearly any kind of file to Dropbox. However, there are certain limitations based on your computer's operating system.

## 4. Share with anyone

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with always see the latest version of the file.

## Make it happen!

- ☒ [Share view-only access to your stuff](#)
- ☒ [Invite others to edit your files with you](#)



### Hint

Shared files are read-only, meaning people can view and comment, but not make edits. Shared folders can be read-only, or you can let people edit the files in a folder.

You can share a file with anyone, even if they don't have a Dropbox account. If someone shares with you, you can either click the link in the email or notification you receive, or [add a shared folder to your account](#).



### Building block

Downloading: If you download the file in a shared link and add it to your Dropbox, you won't see any future updates to that file—downloading creates your own, unique version of the file.

## 5. Sync files

With Dropbox, you can access your files on any device linked to your account. This feature—which we call "[Sync](#)"—is core to what Dropbox



## Make it happen!

✓ Be sure you've installed the Dropbox apps on all your devices, and signed in to each with the same email address and password; then add a file to Dropbox.

✓ Next, open that file in Dropbox, edit it, save, and close—you'll see these edits reflected in all the other places you use to access your account.



### Hint

Sync happens automatically—no manual uploading / downloading required.



### Building block

Sync: Whether you add a file to Dropbox or remove it, that change will reflect on all the other devices you use to connect to Dropbox. For example, if you delete a file from the Dropbox folder on your computer, you'll no longer see it on the Dropbox website or on your phone.

## 6. Next steps

Thanks for reading! If you're done with the building blocks guide, check out the [mastery guide](#). You'll find intros to advanced features, quick troubleshooting, and more.

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How helpful was this article?



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#### Invite members to your Dropbox Business team

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